

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 18 MAR 1997

DECEMBER KEY FIGURES

	Nov 96	Dec 96	12 months ended Dec 96
Number of disputes	52	48	524
Number of employees ('000s)	49.3	22.9	576.5
Working days lost ('000s)	52.0	27.2	924.5
Working days lost per thousand employees	131

DECEMBER KEY POINTS

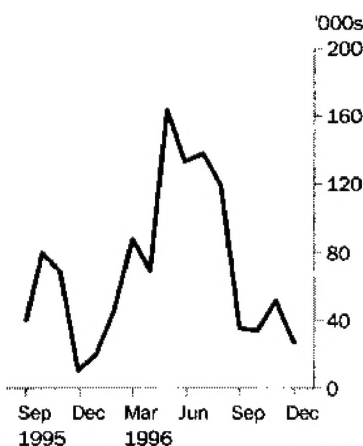
MONTHLY ESTIMATES

- Australia lost a total of 27,200 working days.
- There was a significant level of disputation in the Coal mining industry, with 16,200 working days lost.
- On a State basis New South Wales recorded the highest number of working days lost (15,700) which represented 58% of days lost in Australia.
- States that reported a moderate level of disputation were Queensland, with 6,300 working days lost and Victoria (3,500).

ANNUAL ESTIMATES

- The number of working days lost in 1996 was 924,500, an increase of 69% over the 1995 calendar year. While the number of disputes reported in 1996 (524) was 19% less than in 1995, the number of employees involved increased by 67% to 576,500.
- Industries that recorded the highest level of disputation for the year ended December 1996 were Construction with 319,800 working days lost, Education; Health and community services (250,600), and Coal mining (160,800).
- The Coal mining industry had the highest number of working days lost per thousand employees with 7,171, compared with the Construction industry (852).
- On a State basis New South Wales and Queensland shared the highest rate of working days lost per thousand employees (162).

Working days lost



INQUIRIES

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Paul Singleton on 03 9615 7389, or any ABS Office.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE

RELEASE DATE

January 1997

17 April 1997

February 1997

19 May 1997

March 1997

18 June 1997

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CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

Revisions have been made to the monthly series as the result of disputes which were identified after the release of the previous publication.

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W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE PERIOD, Australia

NUMBER OF DISPUTES..... EMPLOYEES INVOLVED...

Period	Commenced in period	Total	Newly involved(a)	Total	Working days lost
	No.	No.	'000	'000	'000
1994	556	560	263.4	265.1	501.6
1995	635	643	335.4	344.3	547.6
1996	520	524	574.6	576.5	924.5
1995					
October	53	61	81.1	93.4	79.6
November	54	59	30.0	32.7	68.7
December	40	43	12.4	12.5	11.1
1996					
January	21	25	6.1	8.0	20.0
February	60	66	76.8	78.1	45.6
March	49	58	24.0	64.9	87.4
April	34	43	27.4	69.2	68.7
May	50	58	139.3	185.7	164.1
June	47	53	14.4	156.6	133.4
July	40	45	78.9	155.5	137.8
August	36	41	100.7	109.7	119.5
September	38	45	27.5	34.1	34.7
October	56	63	21.9	22.9	33.9
November	46	52	48.6	49.3	52.0
December	43	48	8.9	22.9	27.2

(a) Comprises employees involved in disputes which commenced during the month and additional employees involved in disputes which continued from the previous month.

WORKING DAYS LOST, By Industry—Australia

Period	MINING.....		MANUFACTURING.....		Const- ruction	Transport and storage; Communi- cation services	Education; Health and community services	Other industries(a)	All industries
	Coal	Other	Metal product; Machinery and equipment	Other					
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
1994	151.0	18.3	45.4	78.3	20.2	59.4	73.8	55.2	501.6
1995	111.1	78.0	54.8	105.1	42.7	38.6	70.9	46.3	547.6
1996	160.8	4.4	58.6	44.8	319.8	20.4	250.6	64.9	924.5
1995									
October	5.3	5.2	10.3	27.7	12.0	13.6	2.4	3.1	79.6
November	43.4	2.0	7.0	4.8	0.0	6.3	4.2	1.0	68.7
December	3.9	1.4	2.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.0	2.5	11.1
1996									
January	2.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	10.9	0.1	1.4	5.3	20.0
February	8.8	2.1	2.1	2.7	2.8	2.1	17.5	7.6	45.6
March	8.3	0.7	0.3	1.4	2.3	5.3	62.6	6.5	87.4
April	13.1	0.7	0.1	1.4	0.4	0.3	46.3	6.4	68.7
May	6.2	0.0	1.7	2.8	96.9	1.8	52.6	2.2	164.1
June	9.9	0.0	0.6	3.0	103.7	0.5	15.5	0.1	133.4
July	33.1	0.0	3.4	4.4	56.2	2.6	13.0	25.0	137.8
August	27.9	0.9	38.4	12.9	19.7	3.7	14.6	1.4	119.5
September	3.8	0.0	0.9	12.5	12.9	1.5	3.0	0.1	34.7
October	12.2	0.0	4.9	2.1	12.4	0.2	0.8	1.5	33.9
November	19.1	0.0	5.7	0.7	0.8	1.2	16.8	7.7	52.0
December	16.2	0.0	0.4	1.0	0.8	1.1	6.6	1.1	27.2

(a) Comprises: Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Electricity, gas and water supply; Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Cultural and recreational services; Personal and other services.



WORKING DAYS LOST

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
Period	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
1994	223.2	87.0	133.3	18.0	27.4	4.6	7.0	1.1	501.6
1995	113.6	126.1	182.7	15.3	101.6	3.5	3.6	1.2	547.6
1996	386.7	203.2	205.8	42.9	47.3	13.0	4.5	21.0	924.5
1995									
October	6.7	14.5	10.4	0.2	47.6	0.0	0.0	0.3	79.6
November	38.3	4.8	22.9	1.0	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	68.7
December	5.5	1.8	3.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	11.1
1996									
January	2.7	1.1	2.6	0.3	12.4	0.8	0.0	0.2	20.0
February	21.5	7.4	4.7	3.9	3.9	0.1	1.4	2.7	45.6
March	59.1	11.6	5.4	10.0	1.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	87.4
April	60.3	3.1	2.9	0.6	1.4	0.1	0.2	0.0	68.7
May	64.7	30.7	44.0	10.6	9.9	0.2	1.7	2.2	164.1
June	50.8	25.0	43.9	5.0	4.4	0.4	0.0	4.0	133.4
July	48.4	44.1	28.3	2.8	1.8	4.4	0.3	7.8	137.8
August	19.9	44.7	33.1	5.5	8.5	5.2	0.1	2.7	119.5
September	9.4	12.2	8.1	1.8	1.6	1.3	0.0	0.3	34.7
October	7.0	6.0	18.8	0.3	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	33.9
November	27.3	13.7	7.6	1.2	0.9	0.3	0.1	1.0	52.0
December	15.7	3.5	6.3	1.1	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.1	27.2

WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES, By Industry: Australia-12 months ended

MINING..... MANUFACTURING.....

Twelve months ended	Coal	Other	Metal product; Machinery and equipment	Other	Const- ruction	Transport and storage; Communi- cation services	Education; Health and community services	Other industries(a)	All industries
1995									
October	3 271	1 407	134	197	123	111	106	16	91
November	4 877	1 428	142	166	122	118	58	15	85
December	4 660	1 359	142	160	115	84	57	12	79
1996									
January	4 484	1 343	137	159	144	74	57	14	80
February	4 543	1 319	117	151	109	77	70	14	79
March	4 561	1 212	90	129	114	87	119	15	85
April	5 011	1 152	75	125	110	87	153	14	90
May	4 757	575	77	118	371	78	173	15	101
June	4 981	556	73	113	630	75	175	14	114
July	6 342	490	79	98	772	76	184	19	128
August	7 214	361	169	106	822	80	191	17	139
September	7 109	220	169	115	856	82	183	16	138
October	7 707	128	153	75	849	53	181	16	131
November	6 625	95	150	69	851	42	190	17	129
December	7 171	73	146	70	852	43	196	17	131
December 1992	3 078	840	309	243	126	192	172	57	147
December 1993	2 915	254	426	121	41	37	106	41	100
December 1994	5 964	323	117	123	59	137	63	16	76

(a) Comprises: Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Electricity, gas and water supply; Wholesale trade; Retail trade; Accommodation, cafes and restaurants; Finance and insurance; Property and business services; Government administration and defence; Cultural and recreational services; Personal and other services.



WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES-12 months ended

Twelve months ended	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Australian Capital Territory	Australia
1995									
October	64	84	157	41	156	30	52	9	91
November	50	81	161	32	157	30	49	8	85
December	48	72	148	28	150	22	48	9	79
1996									
January	48	71	145	28	166	24	48	10	80
February	55	70	126	24	168	23	60	26	79
March	76	71	114	39	168	20	32	26	85
April	99	65	108	40	168	20	34	25	90
May	122	72	107	55	166	19	57	40	101
June	140	76	135	61	168	17	57	68	114
July	159	96	141	64	162	39	61	123	128
August	162	112	164	74	160	70	61	142	139
September	163	113	167	77	137	77	54	142	138
October	162	107	172	78	70	77	54	141	131
November	157	112	160	78	69	79	54	148	129
December	162	113	162	80	68	78	61	148	131
December 1992	80	359	61	24	89	271	38	21	147
December 1993	83	157	117	50	48	28	31	75	100
December 1994	99	52	115	35	42	29	103	8	76

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, Australia-12 months ended December 1996(a)

<i>Number of disputes</i>	<i>Employees involved (directly and indirectly)</i>	<i>Working days lost</i>
No.	'000	'000

CAUSE OF DISPUTE

Wages	68	118.1	237.9
Leave, pensions, compensation	1	0.1	0.0
Managerial policy	280	200.9	424.2
Physical working conditions	83	12.3	19.6
Trade unionism	50	28.4	45.2
Hours of work	11	1.9	6.6
Other	30	215.8	194.6
Total	523	577.5	928.1

DURATION OF DISPUTE

Up to and including 1 day	295	281.3	201.4
Over 1 and up to and including 2 days	131	96.5	143.8
Over 2 and less than 5 days	64	191.0	475.9
5 and less than 10 days	22	6.5	53.4
10 and less than 20 days	7	1.3	17.9
20 days and over	4	1.0	35.7
Total	523	577.5	928.1

METHOD OF SETTLEMENT

Negotiation	73	28.6	59.2
State legislation	17	5.7	11.0
Federal and joint Federal-State legislation	25	6.6	28.4
Resumption without negotiation	402	536.2	829.1
Other methods	6	0.4	0.4
Total	523	577.5	928.1

(a) Includes only industrial disputes which ended during the year.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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INTRODUCTION

1 The statistics in this publication relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred. Ten working days is equivalent to the amount of ordinary time worked by ten people in one day, regardless of the length of the stoppage, for example, 3,000 workers on strike for 2 hours would be counted as 750 working days lost (assuming they work an 8 hour day).

2 The statistics of working days lost relate to the losses due to industrial disputes only (see the definition of 'Disputes' in the Glossary). Effects on other establishments, such as stand-downs because of lack of materials, disruption of transport services, power cuts, etc. are not included.

3 The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector), from trade unions and from reports of government authorities. Particulars of some stoppages, e.g. State or Australia wide general strikes may have been estimated and the statistics therefore should be regarded as giving only a broad measure of the extent of industrial disputes as defined above.

TYPE OF DISPUTE

4 Included in these statistics are the following types of industrial disputes:

- unauthorised stopwork meetings;
- unofficial strikes;
- sympathetic strikes (e.g. strikes in support of a group of workers already on strike);
- political or protest strikes;
- general strikes;
- work stoppages initiated by employers (e.g. lockouts); and
- rotating or revolving strikes (i.e. strikes which occur when workers at different locations take turns to stop work).

Excluded from these statistics are work-to-rules, go-slows, bans (e.g. overtime bans) and sit-ins. In addition, industrial disputes in which employees resign are deemed to have been resolved. Statistics on those disputes will cease to be collected from the date of the employees' resignations.

CHANGE IN METHODOLOGY

5 The basis for the calculation of working days lost per thousand employees was changed in the January 1995 edition of this publication to use estimates of employees taken from the ABS Labour Force Survey only. Estimates have been recalculated on this basis for each 12 monthly period back to December 1990 and are available on request. For the January 1987 to December 1994 editions of this publication, estimates of employees were taken predominantly from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings (*Employed Wage and Salary Earners* (6248.0)).

6 The basis for the calculation of the number of disputes was changed in the November 1992 publication and the series revised back to September 1991. Prior to September 1991, disputes affecting more than one industry and/or State were counted as a separate dispute in each industry and State and in the Australian total. From September 1991 onwards, a dispute affecting more than one industry and/or State is counted once in each industry and/or State, but only once at the broader industry and Australia level. The reason for the change was to align the method of counting the number of industrial disputes with the International Labour Organisation guidelines. This change does not affect the estimates of employees involved or working days lost.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION

7 Industry information on a monthly basis from January 1994 and on an annual basis from December 1994 is classified according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) — for more details refer to *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification, 1993, (1292.0)*. It replaces the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) which had been in use for many years. Data for periods prior to January 1994 for monthly data and December 1994 for annual data have been classified only according to ASIC.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

8 Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in information provided by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Although considerable care is taken in questionnaire design; in the instructions given to respondents; and in editing the returns; these inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

9 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications and standard data services which are available from ABS Bookshops:

- *Industrial Disputes, Australia, 1995 (6322.0)* — issued annually
- *Labour Statistics, Australia, 1993 (6101.0)* — issued annually
- *Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)* — issued monthly
- *Trade Union Statistics, Australia, 1996 (6323.0)* — issued annually
- *Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1995 (6325.0)* — issued biennially
- *Working Arrangements, Australia, August 1995 (6342.0.40.001)* — standard data service
- *Employment Benefits, Australia, August 1994 (6334.0.40.001)* — standard data service — issued irregularly

10 Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia (1101.0)*. The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice (1105.0)* which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.

UNPUBLISHED STATISTICS

11 A range of unpublished data is also available on request including dispute details at more detailed industry levels, cross-classified by State/Territory, and finer cause of dispute and method of settlement categories than those published. Considerable time series exist for most variables. Inquiries regarding data availability and the associated charges should be directed to Paul Singleton on 03 9615 7389.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

.. not applicable

12 Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

FLOPPY DISK SERVICE

13 Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (06) 252 6684.

GLOSSARY

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Cause of dispute The statistics for cause of industrial disputes relate to the reported main cause of stoppage of work and not necessarily all causes that may have been responsible for the stoppage of work. For these reasons, the statistics do not reflect the relative importance of all causes of disputes as perceived by both employers and employees. The causes are classified from information supplied by employers and according to standards determined by the International Labour Organisation. The classification of causes is as follows:

Wages. Claims involving general principles relating to wages e.g. increase (decrease) in wages; variation in method of payment or combined claims relating to wages, hours or conditions of work in which the claim about wages is deemed to be the most important. Combined claims in which the other claims are deemed to be the most important are included under the relevant clause. Disputes over award restructuring are included under managerial policy.

Leave, pensions, compensation. Claims involving general principles relating to holidays and leave provisions; pension and retirement provisions; workers' compensation provisions; insertion of penal clause provisions in awards.

Managerial policy. Disputes concerning the exercise of managerial control by employers, e.g. terms and conditions of employment (other than disputes specifically about wages and hours); new awards and agreements; award restructuring; work practices; principles of promotion or deployment of staff including roster complaints and retrenchments; disciplinary matters including alleged victimisation of union officials; employment of particular persons; disagreement with managerial decisions.

Physical working conditions. Disputes concerning physical working conditions and safety issues, e.g. protective clothing and equipment; first aid services; uncomfortable working conditions; lack of, or the condition of, amenities; claims for assistance; shortage or poor distribution of equipment or material; condition of equipment; new production methods and equipment, arduous physical tasks.

Trade unionism. Disputes concerning employment of non-unionists, inter-union and intra-union disputes; sympathy stoppages in support of employees in another industry; recognition of union activities.

Hours of work. Claims involving general principles relating to hours of work, e.g. decrease (increase) in hours, distribution of hours.

Other. Disputes concerning protests directed against persons or situations other than those relating to the employer/employee relationship, e.g. political matters; fining and jailing of persons; lack of work; lack of adequate transport; non-award public holidays; accidents and attendance at funerals. Stoppages for which no reason is given are also included in this category.

GLOSSARY

Disputes	<p>For these statistics, an <i>industrial dispute</i> is defined as a withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work, each withdrawal or refusal being made in order to enforce a demand, to resist a demand, or to express a grievance.</p> <p>A dispute affecting several establishments is counted as a single dispute if it is organised or directed by one person or organisation; otherwise it is counted as a separate dispute at each establishment (in each State or Territory) and in each industry in which it occurred.</p> <p>A dispute affecting more than one industry and/or State is counted once in each industry and State but only once at the broader industry and Australia level. Prior to September 1991 disputes covering more than one industry and/or State were counted differently (refer to paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes for details).</p> <p>When there is a return to work between stoppages over the same issue, and the return to work is for less than two complete months, the stoppages are counted as a single dispute. When the return to work is for two or more months, the dispute is considered to have ended at the time of the return to work. Should a subsequent stoppage occur, it is counted as a new dispute.</p>
Disputes which occurred during the period	<p><i>Disputes which occurred during the period</i> encompasses those disputes which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ started in a previous month or year and ended in the reference period, or ▪ began and ended in the reference period, or ▪ began in the reference period and continued into the next period, or ▪ started prior to the reference month or year, continued through the reference period and into the next period.
Duration of dispute	<p>The <i>duration</i> of a dispute is the average number of working days lost per employee involved in the dispute. The duration of the dispute is calculated by dividing the number of working days lost in the dispute by the number of employees involved (both directly and indirectly).</p>
Employees	<p><i>Employees</i> refers to wage and salary earners only. Excluded are persons who are self-employed (e.g. building sub-contractors, owner-drivers of trucks) and employers.</p> <p><i>Employees directly involved</i> are those who actually participated in the dispute in order to enforce or resist a demand or to express a grievance.</p> <p><i>Employees indirectly involved</i> are those who ceased work at the establishment where the stoppages occurred, but who are not themselves parties to the dispute. Employees who ceased work at establishments other than those where the stoppages occurred are excluded (see paragraph 2 of the Explanatory Notes).</p>

GLOSSARY

Employees (continued)	<p><i>Total employees involved</i> for any period of time are obtained by adding together the number of employees involved in each dispute in the period. For any period of time the figures may include details of the same employees involved in more than one dispute. The longer the period of reference, the more chance there is of some double counting in the number of employees involved. Where there are varying numbers of employees involved during the progress of a dispute, the figures of employees involved relate to the largest number of individual employees involved on any one day. Generally, the <i>total</i> number of employees involved for each year will equal the sum of the total number of employees involved in the first month of a year plus the number of employees <i>newly</i> involved in subsequent months. Differences between monthly and annual totals can occur due to the temporary cessation of stoppages which resume in subsequent months. Employees re-involved in this type of dispute are not classified as employees <i>newly</i> involved in stoppages in the second period in which the dispute occurs.</p>
Method of Settlement	<p>Statistics of the <i>method of settlement</i> of industrial disputes relate to the method directly responsible for ending the stoppage of work as reported and not necessarily to the method (or methods) responsible for settling all matters in dispute. For these reasons, they do not reflect the relative importance of the work of various industrial tribunals operating under State and Federal legislation. The classification of method of settlement is as follows:</p> <p><i>Negotiation.</i> Private negotiation between the parties involved, or their representatives, without the intervention or assistance of authorities constituted under State or Federal industrial legislation.</p> <p><i>State legislation.</i> Intervention or assistance of an industrial authority or authorities created by or constituted under State conciliation and arbitration or wages board legislation, or reference to such authorities or compulsory or voluntary conference. Intervention, assistance or advice of State government officials or inspectors.</p> <p><i>Federal and joint Federal-State legislation.</i> Compulsory or voluntary conference or by intervention or assistance of, or reference to, the industrial relation commissions created by or constituted under the Industrial Relations Act, Coal Industry Acts, Stevedoring Industry Act, and other acts such as the Navigation Act, Public Service Arbitration Act. Intervention, assistance or advice of Federal government officials or inspectors.</p> <p><i>Resumption without negotiation.</i> This category may include some disputes which are settled subject to subsequent negotiation of a formal nature, such as industrial court hearings. Stop-work meetings are included, and this category may also include disputes settled by 'resumption' as stated, but about which no further information is available.</p> <p><i>Other methods.</i> Mediation; filling places of employees on strike or locked out; closing establishments permanently; dismissal or resignation of employees.</p>
Working days lost	<p><i>Working days lost</i> refers to working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in the dispute and figures are generally as reported by parties to the dispute. For some disputes working days lost are estimated on the basis of the number of employees involved and the duration of the dispute.</p>

GLOSSARY

**Working days lost per
thousand employees**

Working days lost per thousand employees are calculated for the 12 month period from working days lost and estimates of employees obtained from the ABS Labour Force Survey. Refer to paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the way in which these measures are calculated, and the change in the method of calculation from the January 1995 edition of this publication.

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